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DEPT FOR L/LEI-S(TORRES) AND EUR/WE(ALLEGRONE)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/01/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [FR](#) [CJAN](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH APPROVAL OF MANUEL NORIEGA EXTRADITION
IMMINENT

REF: STATE 84275

Classified By: PolMC Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (B & D).

¶1. (SBU) Per reftel, POL Deputy discussed June 22 urgency of Manuel Noriega extradition proceedings with MFA Americas PDAS-equivalent Marc Laforet. Laforet was joined by DAS-equivalent for Cuba and Central America Blandine Kreiss and desk officers from the U.S. and Central American desks.

¶2. (C) Laforet responded that a June 3 interministerial meeting had produced an agreement to recommend to the Presidency that the GOF agree to provide the assurances sought in the U.S. diplomatic note of February 2007. He reiterated that, while France was not in a position to grant POW status to Noriega, it would be able to afford him treatment at least equal to that he is receiving in the United States. Laforet predicted that the Presidency would respond favorably within a matter of days -- and possibly as early as late that same day -- given the Presidency's likely interest in taking a decision in advance of Secretary Rice's June 24 arrival in Paris. Laforet promised that a decision would be taken by June 26 at the latest. While he could not presume to speak for the Presidency, he was confident that the decision would be positive.

¶3. (SBU) Laforet confirmed that France would transmit its official response by diplomatic note via its Embassy in Washington "before Independence day," at the latest, and promised to provide us a copy. In presenting the French diplomatic note, Laforet said the Embassy would be interested in obtaining further details from Washington about specific U.S. procedural requirements for effecting the extradition.

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